

## This is How We Know (1 John 2:3-14)

How can we know if our faith is an optional add-on or the defining reality of our lives? How can we tell if it's counterfeit or real? How can we know that we truly know God? Religious experience isn't the answer, being raised to believe a certain set of values isn't the answer, gathering enough people around us who sound like us isn't the answer. John says, "This is how we know" and lays out a test that both reveals and comforts.

### 1. The sure test of obedience (1 John 2:3-6)

VV4, 6 and 10, "Whoever SAYS I know him, SAYS he abides in him, SAYS he is in the light"

What John puts before us is a way to measure and evaluate. It's for our good and out of love.

V5 KEEP his word (God's will) = to watch; guard; hold fast. John 15:1-12, 17; Ephesians 5:15-18

Whoever KEEPS his word "the love of God is perfected" = accomplished; fulfilled.

The entire Law is summed up this way: Galatians 5:14; Romans 13:8-10. 1 John 3:23

"WALK in the same way (he) Jesus walked." = IMITATION "Follow me!"

Are you growing in Christ-likeness?

Jesus' life and teachings invite us to abandon our lives and find true life in him.

### 2. The defining mark of love (1 John 2:7-11)

V7 OLD in that "you had (it) from the beginning"

Taught by Moses? YES. Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 6:5 Grounded in God's character? Yes.

+ "the word that you have heard." Ever hear something as if for the first time?

V8 NEW in that it is true in Jesus AND in you...

Jesus taught it, brought clarity to it, fulfilled it and empowers us to walk in it.

Love is the defining mark of a follower of Jesus. John 13:34-35

Galatians 1:4 We get a taste of *the age to come* as we walk in love.

VV9-11 Love + hate are set in opposition to each other with no alternative.

Love = not necessarily a feeling but a response / a decision / action on our part.

Where have you given yourself permission to hate?

2 Peter 1:5-10 = the faith + love "sandwich"

### 3. Poetic encouragement on repeat (1 John 2:12-14)

Like a good song with a chorus worth repeating.

PUT THIS SONG ON REPEAT. Celebrate what is true.

**QUESTIONS** (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. Read 1 John 2:3-14. Why does obedience to God give us assurance that we know him? Are you eager to *find out what is pleasing to God*? Read Ephesians 5:15-18.
2. What does it look like in your own life to "walk in the same way in which he (Jesus) walked"?
3. John says the old command is also the new. In what way is it old? In what way is it new? See Galatians 5:14; Romans 13:8-10; 1 John 3:23; John 13:34-35.
4. In verse 8 John says "the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining". How does this encourage you? Galatians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:5; Ephesians 5:8-11
5. In verses 9-11 Love + hate are set in opposition to each other with no alternative. Where is it "easy" to dismiss others as evil, giving ourselves "permission" to hate?
6. 2 Peter 1:5-10 was called the faith + love "sandwich". Qualities that belong to those in "the light". What has happened to us if we lack these qualities? See 2 Peter 1:9
7. Read 1 John 2:12-14. Following the "test" of obedience and love in VV3-11 how are these words an encouragement? Let the repetition of these verses sink in, what effect does it have on you?

Ask God to shine his light into every corner of your life, revealing sin and cleansing you of it so that you will walk in the light rather than darkness. Ask God to help you "walk as Jesus walked" and to love as God has loved us. Then pray we would do that as a whole church community.